

NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service
Sierra National Forest**



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For Immediate Release

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Lightning Strikes Pound the Sierra National Forest

U.S. Forest Service firefighters battling 300-acre Aspen Fire

Clovis, CA – Since Sunday afternoon, the Sierra National Forest- High Sierra Ranger District has received significant lightning activity. These downstrikes have resulted in 15 new wildfires, the largest of which is the 300-acre Aspen Fire located below Stump Springs Road just north of Aspen Creek.

Extreme fire behavior has been observed on the Aspen Fire, with spotting of over 600 feet ahead of the main fire. At one point late Tuesday afternoon, all crews were pulled off the fire line for safety reasons. The Aspen Fire has the potential to make large uphill runs and threaten the Stump Springs Road area. Sierra National Forest officials have ordered the Central Sierra Type 2 Incident Management Team for the incident (<http://scsierra.imtcenter.net/main/Index.aspx>).

Of the additional lightning fires, three are in wilderness areas and two have been unable to be located by fire personnel, but are likely to show smoke again during the day Wednesday. All fires are less than ¼ acre. The fires are split between the Kings River drainage and the San Joaquin River drainage and occurred between 1,100 feet and approx. 9,400 feet in elevation. Four fires are already fully contained but will continue to be monitored.

There are currently four 20-person fire crews assigned to the fires with two additional crews on order. Three air tankers and four helicopters are also involved in suppression efforts. U.S. Forest Service smokejumpers have been deployed on some of the more remote fires.

For additional fire information, please contact one of our Forest Service offices: High Sierra Ranger District (559) 855-5355, or Clovis (559) 297-0706.

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